

Wisconsin Tree Farmer

August 2011

2011 Wisconsin Tree Farmers of the Year

Inside this issue:

2011 Wisconsin Tree Farmers of the Year **1**

Meet the 2011 Wisconsin Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year Jim and Ann Heerey **2**

SFI-SIC Inconsistent Practices Hotline **3**

2011 National Tree Farmer Convention Highlights **4**

2011 Ouellette Tree Farm Field Day a Success! **5**

Want to receive Wisconsin Tree Farmer electronically? Find out how **5**

By
Shirley Bargander

I would like to extend congratulations to all of the 2011 Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year (OTFY) at the County, District, and State levels of recognition as well as their nominating foresters. The Tree Farmers recognized this year for promoting sustainable forestry and standards of the Tree Farm Program are:

District 3: **James (Jim) and Ann Heerey – Barren County, District and State OTFY**
Nominating Forester:
Dennis Waterman – Consulting Forester

District 7: Theodore (Ted) Zabel – Marinette County and District 7 OTFY
Nominating Forester:
Steve Kaufman – DNR Forester

District 13: Ernst and Rae Gutschow – Manitowoc County and District 13 OTFY
Nominating Forester: Sue Crowley – DNR Forester

District 14: Tim and Linda Eisele – Crawford County and District 14 OTFY
Nominating Forester:
Shirley Bargander – DNR

Forester

District 14:
Jack Halbrehder – Monroe County OTFY
Nominating Forester:
Christine Walroth – DNR Forester

2011 Wisconsin Tree Farmer of the Year

Congratulations to James (Jim) and Ann Heerey on being selected the 2011 Wisconsin Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year. Jim and Ann have owned their 425 acre tree farm, located in Barren County, for 23 years. The first forest management plan was written in 1992 and updated in 2003. The make up of their tree farm consists of 190 acres of pine and other conifers. Northern hardwoods make up 127 acres along with 73 acres of red maple with an oak component. The remainder of the tree farm is oak-hickory, swamp and grass.

Jim has been a member of the Barron County Woodland Owners Association (BCWOA) for many years. During that time he has spent numerous years on the Board of Directors and has served as President

two different times. As a member of BCWOA, he has written numerous articles for the BCWOA newsletter and helped organize many of the workshops that are presented for members as well as for the general public.

Jim is a graduate of both the Master Woodland Steward and the Woodland Leadership Institute programs sponsored by the University of Wisconsin Extension as well as the Wisconsin Coverts Project. The expertise and information received at these programs has been passed on through the many woodland activities attended and hosted by Jim.

Jim also served on the governor appointed Wisconsin Council on Forestry from 2004 through 2009, representing the small woodland owners and environmental educators of Wisconsin.

Over the years the Heerey's have also collaborated with the local DNR, NRCS, LCD and UWEX offices to coordinate educational and informational efforts on all conservation subjects.

Jim played a leading role in establishing 32

2011 Wisconsin Tree Farmers of the Year *(continued from page 1)*

Jim's efforts included leading the grant writing effort, coordinating efforts to compile and print the brochure for the demonstration forest tour as well as coordinating the signing of each of the sites. Two of the Demonstration Forest Tour sites are located in Jim and Ann's property. These sites are open for the public to view at any time.

Jim has attended training to serve as a Woodland Advocate for the Wisconsin Family Forests program and has visited 30 forest landowners in 2009 and 2010 to introduce them to the concept of forest stewardship.

Jim and Ann have hosted 3 woodland management workshops on their property in the last 10 years and their forest activities have been included in the *Country Today* newspaper as well as in 2 recent issues of the *Woodlands and Prairies* magazine.

Over the years the Heerey's conducted many forest management practices on their Tree Farm. They thinned and released 18 acres, they pruned 5 acres, conducted 82 acres of regeneration harvests, 132 acres of intermediate thinning and 40 acres of salvage-sanitation harvests. In addition, they conducted more than 50 acres of heavy site preparation for planting, planted 205 acres of conifers and 15 acres of hardwoods.

Along with all of their hard work of forest management, the Heerey's also carry out many other stewardship activities on their Tree Farm. They ensure full protection of their woodlands from grazing and continually monitor for insects and diseases. They conduct gooseberry eradication, treat invasive plants (buckthorn and barberry), they create and maintain firebreaks, as well as hiking and access trails with full consideration of erosion control measures. They have created wildlife ponds, planted food plots, erected blue bird houses and also work on a wetland restoration project.

In addition to practicing sound forest management on their properties and promoting forest stewardship to other woodland owners as well as the general public, the Heerey's have been leaders in seeking solutions to better forest management. Some of the current projects include direct seeding of acorns for oak regeneration, planting mixed species plantations for diversity. Species used include red pine, white pine, European larch, tamarack and oaks. They have been experiencing with various techniques to reduce deer and rabbit damage to tree seedlings. They have intensively managed white pine at low stocking densities for the production

of high quality veneer and sawtimber.

Jim and Ann have demonstrated a forest stewardship ethic matched by only a very few forest landowners. We are privileged to have them working in northwestern Wisconsin and they truly have earned the honor of being the 2011 Wisconsin Tree Farmers of the Year.

Who is SFI Inc.?

SFI Inc. is a fully independent, charitable organization dedicated to promoting sustainable forest management.

SFI Inc. addresses local needs through a unique grassroots network of SFI Implementation Committees.

The SFI forest certification standard is based on principles that promote sustainable forest management, including measures to protect water quality, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, species at risk, and Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value.

The standard is used widely across North America, and has strong acceptance in the global marketplace. This is especially important at a time when there is growing demand for green building responsible paper purchasing.

Join Grassroots Network and receive Advocacy Updates!

Visit the website <http://www.forestfoundation.org/actionnetwork> to sign up for regular e-mail updates on current advocacy efforts and opportunities to contact your legislators, get an alert when your involvement can make a critical difference, get your reps' votes by e-mail weekly, or send a note to a friend to let them know about our Grassroots Action Network!

Tree Farm Sign License Orders Now Online

Tree Farmers enrolled in the MFL program can now order signs online at the Wisconsin Tree Farm Committee website www.witreefarm.org

Orders can be processed by printing out and completing the order form, signing the license agreement, enclosing a check and mailing it to the Wisconsin Tree Farm Committee.

Please allow 4-6 weeks for processing/ delivery. For more information please contact the WTFC at (715)252-2001 or witreefarm@gmail.com

Wisconsin SFI® Inconsistent Practices Phone Program

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) is a comprehensive system of principles developed by foresters, conservationists and scientists combining the perpetual growing and harvesting of trees with long-term protection of wildlife, plants, soil and water quality to enhance forest protection and strengthen the SFI participants' commitment to healthy forests and sustainable forestry.

The SFI Standard spells out the program's compliance requirements for participants in Wisconsin and nationally based on principles that address economic, environmental, cultural and legal issues – and continuous improvement.

One service the Wisconsin SFI SIC committee offers is a toll-free phone inquiry line. Anyone with a sincere concern about a forestry activity they see may call the SFI office and initiate an inquiry.

Callers are asked to provide whatever basic information they have about the activity: (1) are SFI participants involved; (2) type of ownership, for example, public (county, state, federal) or private (individual, farm, business or corporation); (3) location, whether general or by legal description; (4) how recently the activity was observed; (5) the identity, if known, of those apparently involved, such as the landowner, broker, logger, trucker, forester, lumber or paper company, and (6) an explanation of the caller's concerns, such as water quality, reforestation, aesthetics, sustainability, wood utilization, or endangered species.

Caller's identities are kept confidential and are known only by the one

SFI volunteer answering the phone and facilitating the inquiry.

The Wisconsin SFI's Inconsistent Practices Subcommittee – comprised of professional foresters – will investigate the complaint if it involves SFI certified land or an SFI certified company and, if warranted and permitted, inspect the activity site. If the activity involves an alleged violation of local, state or federal law the caller will be referred to an appropriate enforcement agency.

To add transparency and assist with any site inspection, the Wisconsin Tree Farm Committee has volunteered to assign an ATFS Certified Tree Farm Inspector to accompany the field inspection team, providing an additional forester's expertise and analysis. The Wisconsin Master Logger Certification program also is notified if a Master Logger is connected with the inquiry.

After reviewing all information available, a decision is made by the Inconsistent Practices Subcommittee whether the activity is, or is not, inconsistent with the SFI Standard. The decision, including an explanation of the factors in the decision making, is provided to the caller by the SFI office to maintain confidentiality. Typically, inquiries are resolved within a month or two, depending on circumstances and complexity.

The SFI recognizes that forestry is both science and art, and reasonable persons – land owners, loggers, truckers, foresters, receiving mills – may honestly disagree about a decision. But all reasonable effort is made to achieve agreement among the caller, the Inconsistent Practices Subcommittee,

and those involved in the activity.

In addition, callers are informed of their appeal rights of a decision. Initial appeals are addressed at the state level, but a state's appeal decision is appealable to the SFI's national office. All inquiries and appeals are addressed with the SFI Standard as the guide, and with objectivity, attention to detail and respect.

If an activity is determined inconsistent, the SFI participants involved are expected to take action to remedy the situation and/or preclude its recurrence. It also may provide "lessons learned" information helpful to others. Inquiries are a serious matter as SFI participants are subject to regular, rigorous, third-party audits of all aspects of their forestry operations. Compliance with the SFI Standard can determine ultimately if they will be allowed to retain the privilege of holding themselves out as certified, sustainable forestry companies to their suppliers and customers.

It is important to note that sometimes a call cannot be addressed by the SFI because it has no jurisdiction; for example, if the forest is not part of the SFI certification program, or the paper or saw mills receiving the wood are not SFI participants. Those limitations may be determined early in an inquiry or later in the process as additional facts become available.

The Wisconsin SFI program (1-800-504-5742) operates its inconsistent practices inquiry program in order to respond candidly to sincere inquiries about SFI-related forestry activities. It is an important part of the SFI commitment to continual improvement.

Connecting Land & People: Celebrating Exceptional Stewardship in New Mexico

“Drink in our culture and a little enchantment and take a little home with you,” said Joe Stehling, Chair of the New Mexico Tree Farm Committee, as he welcomed more than 300 family forest owners and forestry professionals from 38 states to the 18th annual National Tree Farmer Convention in early August. From utilizing social media to cleaning your chainsaw, Convention offers helpful tips, tools, and networking opportunities for landowners to make sure the next generation inherits a bountiful natural legacy.

Tree Farmer, CPA, and American Forest Foundation (AFF) Board Chairman Clint Bentz opened the 2011 Convention with advice on one of the most pressing issues – the next generation. Bentz advises families to come together to develop shared reasons for owning the land. “The work I do is for the benefit of someone who isn’t even born yet.” Bentz’s message resonates with Tree Farmers; some, like the Langes of Ohio, came to Convention with three generations of family. “The goal of the American Tree Farm System,” said Bentz, “is to put good forestry on the ground—and keep it there.”

A strong future for Tree Farmers depends on a three-pronged approach – on-the-ground assistance programs and management, public support, and the next generation of caretakers. Convention presenters like James Melonas, liaison to the U.S. Forest Service, detailed the opportunities for technical and financial assistance through Farm Bill programs. Gil Lackey gave tips for photographing wildlife, like using trail

cameras firmly mounted near small woodland openings. Todd Page of Intermountain Stihl recommended “Clean [ing] those filters with dish soap — *don’t* blow through them with forced air!” for cleaning your chainsaw. These were just a few of the practical tips presenters had for Tree Farmers.

The Tree Farm network is about sharing solutions to help improve stewardship. But it’s also about reaching out to your neighbor and community leaders to engage the public.

Chris Erwin, from the Alabama Forest Association, teamed up with Salem Saloom, 2010 National Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year, to share stories about successful outreach efforts. One of the most effective tools to educate the public about sustainable forestry is inviting neighbors and community leaders for a walk in your woods.

Melissa Harden, Manager of Public Affairs at AFF, encouraged Tree Farmers to join the action network to educate lawmakers about the benefits of sustainable forestry. With a low-key, personal approach, Tree Farmers can gain officials’ support for tax policy changes, programs that provide technical services and funds, and green-building policies that recognize Tree Farm certified wood.

Each year, Convention brings together Tree Farmers from across the country to share and celebrate the stewardship of our nation’s forests. We all know the benefits forests provide – clean air, clean water, wildlife

habitat, wood products – but it’s nice to come together for a few days each year to learn new tricks, listen to different strategies, and convene as a community dedicated to passing on a natural legacy our children will be proud of.

For access to Convention presentations, you can visit: <http://www.treefarmssystem.org/concurrentsessions>

AFF's New High School Curriculum Explores Profound Changes Facing America's Forests Today

PLT’s new high school curriculum “*Exploring Environmental Issues: Focus on Forests*” teaches students about forest health, fresh water supply, climate change, who owns America’s forests, and more. Hands-on classroom lessons and field investigations help students develop an understanding of stewardship and informed decision-making on issues that affect forests. For more information visit <http://www.plt.org>.

Project Learning Tree is an award-winning environmental education program designed for teachers and other educators, parents, and community leaders working with youth from preschool through grade 12.

2011 Ouellette Tree Farm Field Day a Success!

The Wisconsin Tree Farm Committee Annual Tree Farm Field Day, held on June 4th this year in Richland County at Dayton Ridge Tree Farm was a resounding success, attracting over 140 registrants and 30-40 volunteers to bring total attendance to 180.

John and Sally Ouellette were very generous hosts in opening their Tree Farm to the public for this special day where the weather cooperated to make for a fun day filled with food, fun, and plenty of forestry and opportunities to learn more about forest management practices.

A special effort was made to invite local landowners, especially those who may not be Tree Farmers, The field day began with a bird walk early in the morning, followed by a breakfast, a welcome by the Planning Committee Chair John DuPlissis (UWEX Forestry Outreach Specialist) and John Nielsen (DNR Regional Forestry Leader) the forester that nominated the Ouellette's in recognition of their commitment to sustainable forestry

as part of the Wisconsin Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year program.

John and Sally Ouellette also received a certificate of commendation recognizing the contributions to stewardship of their woodland and as protectors of wild being such wonderful stewards and protectors of wildlife from Senator Herb Kohl was presented to the Ouellettes by one of the Senator's legislative aides.

The field day agenda included tour stops every 20 minutes where groups learned more about thinning, the influence of soil composition and structure on tree growth by viewing soil pits accompanied by explanations by Greg Rebman NRCS State Forester and Alan Parker, soil scientist.

Jake Elder, DNR forester for Richland County, discussed tree competition, Doc's custom deer enclosure designed to assist the establishment of hardwood seedlings, and thinning practices to improve overall stand structure and tree growth.

Tom Hill, DNR forester of Iowa County spoke about tree grading, timing of harvests, lumber grading, and the importance of a landowner getting multiple bids as part of any planned timber sales on their property.

Greg Edge, DNR Forester, spoke on how to produce quality timber using tree competition using examples from a stand where rows alternated between black walnut, oak, and pine, with the pine to be cut after the hardwoods were established, and also covered proper pruning techniques.

A big thanks also to Steve Kohlstedt, UWEX Agent (Richland County), and Jack Freeman for organizing and deploying the food and refreshments enjoyed by the close to 200 attendees at the field day, to all the volunteers at the field day, and especially to Doc and Sally for opening their property to introduce visitors to the rolling hills and black walnut of Dayton Ridge Tree Farm.

Wisconsin Tree Farmer now delivered straight to your inbox!

The Wisconsin Tree Farmer newsletter is now available in electronic form. Enjoy the newsletter content anywhere when you are away or travelling by having it delivered free to your inbox. Sign up now for delivery of the electronic version of the Wisconsin Tree Farmer newsletter, emailed quarterly. Simply send an email to witreefarm@gmail.com with the words "subscribe newsletter" in the subject line. You will then also receive the two joint WWOA-WTFC

newsletters in .pdf format by email in addition to receiving the electronic issues of the Wisconsin Tree Farmer quarterly. You will have the added benefit of receiving the newsletters two 2 weeks before the hardcopy versions are mailed out.

Currently the print versions of the Summer edition of The Tree Farmer and the two joint WWOA-WTFC newsletters will continue to be mailed to those not interested in signing up for the electronic versions delivered via email.

Offering the newsletters in electronic form saves the Wisconsin Tree Farm Committee a significant amount of

time and money, both in reducing mailing costs, updating mailing addresses, and the associated printing costs of the newsletter, allowing the Committee to allocate more funding to field days and other sustainable forestry outreach activities, and in return get the print newsletter before the print versions arrive in mailboxes.

The electronic versions of the newsletters will also be available on the WTFC website www.witreefarm.org

Questions:? Contact the WTFC at witreefarm@gmail.com or at 715-252-2001

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